

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-7 are pending in the present Application.

**I. The allowable subject matter is respectfully accepted.**

Dependent claims 2, 4, 5 and 7 are indicated to include allowable subject matter at page 5 of the Office Action. Applicants respectfully thank the Examiner for indicating the allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 2 and 4 have been amended to include the subject matter of canceled claim 1 and have been made independent. No claim fees are due.

The claim objections on page 2 of the Office Action have also been respectfully addressed as follows:

In regard to claim 2, "the present time" has been changed to "present time" for antecedent basis. Also, the first occurrence of "the number of times" has been changed to "number of times" for antecedent basis.

Thus, Claims 2, 5 and 4, 7 are allowable.

**II. The anticipation rejections of claims 1 and 3.**

Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kaneko (U.S. Patent No. 6,056,387).

As explained above, claim 3 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 1 and has been made independent. No claim fees are due.

Claim 3 has also been amended to more clearly recite the invention. These amendments are supported at page 24, in lines 9-17; and at page 19, in line 17 through page 20, line 15. No new matter has been added.

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Kaneko

It is respectfully noted that Kaneko does not teach the feature recited in amended claim 3 wherein:

“wherein an approximate expression of table data with respect to surface roughness versus number of times of maintenance operations of the blade is prepared, and wherein the controller warns the user of the time of replacement for the cleaning wiper by informing the user of an existing surface roughness or an amount of abrasion of the blade used in the cleaning wiper, based on the number of times of the maintenance operations, by using the approximate expression.”

In view of the foregoing, amended claim 3 and claim 6 dependent therefrom, are patentably distinguished over Kaneko under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as well as under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

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III. Conclusion.

Reconsideration and allowance of all of the claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any additional charges with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Please telephone the undersigned for any reason to expedite prosecution. Applicants seek to cooperate with the Examiner.

Respectfully submitted,

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